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hybrid culled Mexican, I predicted their certain destruction, and present condition. Such, no doubt, in time, will be the fate of the Anglo-Saxon in North America, which he vainly hopes to avert, by avoiding the fatal error the Spaniards fell into: namely, intermarriage with the native Americans—a savage race, incapable of modern civilization.

Thus, in that very physiological law, the law of hybridism, to which modern physiologists had assigned the creation of new races, I find the sure extinction of the invading or obtrusive race.

XI.—*Treatment of Diseases by Charms, as practised by the Singalese in Ceylon.* By HENRY DICKMAN, Esq., Colonial Surgeon, Ceylon.*

IN common with the civilized nations of antiquity, before Christianity appeared to purify their sciences, the orientals, among whom the Ceylonese form a very interesting and important class, have always shewn a proneness to mythology. They have had their gods of WISDOM, of WAR, of BEAUTY, etc., as their more renowned brethren of ancient Rome had their MINERVAS, their MARSES, and their VENUSES. The tenacity to consecrate an altar to one distinguished in power or wisdom is observable in the *Singalese* in no less a degree than in those who consecrated altars to the "UNKNOWN GODS". This tendency is strikingly perceptible both in the religion and poetry of nations who had any claim to civilization and refinement; and a cursory glance at the *Iliad* of the Greeks and the *Ramayana* of the Hindus would afford an ample illustration.†

But the Singalese, whose national religion is *Budhism*, while admitting the existence of beings whom they denominate GODS and YAKKOS (devils), having influence over sublunary matters, do not concede to them any power over their *eternal* destinies. *Budha* is their supreme being, their all-powerful saviour; a belief in *him*, his *doctrine*, and his *priesthood* (alluded to as "the three gems"), is alone able to save them from eternal misery,

* Communicated by J. W. Fleming, F.R.C.S., surgeon, 37th Regiment.

† No reader of the *Ramayana* will fail to be struck with the analogies between that ancient epic and the *Iliad* of Homer. The Indian Seeta, and the Argive Helen; Rawana and Paris; Rama and Menelaus; Achilles and Sugriva (Hanuman), by whose assistance Rama chiefly succeeded; Sri Lanka Poora and Troy; are striking coincidences in the two epics. And the duration of the siege of Troy is given as ten years; of the war of Rama as twelve. . . . May not the poem of Homer have been founded on the original story of the Ramayna?—*Ceylon Miscellany*, vol. i, No. 1.

and confer on them the happiness of annihilation, or cessation from existence—*Nirwana*,* the ideal heaven of the Buddhist.

Budha himself acknowledges the existence of *Gods*, of *Yakkos*, and of various other beings, who have more or less influence over human affairs; but he is too subtle a philosopher to give them any superiority over him; he is the *sole* supreme; he preaches, and all the gods attend to hear him, and, with uplifted hands, resound his praises.

It would appear that, in the primitive ages of Buddhism, so much regard was not paid to the *Gods* and *Yakkos* as in more modern times; and, as a consistency is observable throughout the teachings of Budha, it is thought that the introduction of the *worship* of the Gods among the Buddhists of Ceylon is, comparatively, of recent origin, and to be ascribed to the invasion of the island by the Malabars of India, to the length of time they had established themselves in Ceylon, and to the diffusion of Brahminical learning among the literati of this country; for, though an anomaly, we find, at the present day, every principal Buddhistical temple in Ceylon having a *dewala* (a temple to a God) annexed to it. To a casual observer it would appear that the Singalese divide their faith between Budha and the Gods, and that the masses do not distinguish the difference between their respective altars. That they are *capable* of doing this is a question.

The *Gods* of the Buddhists are a class of beings who enjoy happiness more or less, according to their *merits*; they are subject to all the passions, and are allowed to interfere with the course of human affairs. They might, as they could, assist the acquisition of virtue by man, or place obstacles in his way; but they are all subject to Budha, attend him as his subjects, and hear his sermons. In the books called the *Guardian Devos*, the *Dii Majores*, the four principal Gods are mentioned; viz., *Dratarushtra*, *Wirudhe*, *Unupakse*, and *Waisrawane*. The last is said to have millions of *Yakkos* (devils) to minister to him. Many lesser Gods are also noticed, having local influences, presiding over trees, rocks, rivers, resembling the *dii minores* of the Romans.

The *Yakkos* are another class of beings, who are also allowed to influence human affairs, and whom the Singalese dread. They are a body of malignant, unhappy creatures, who reside in the rock *Maha Meru* (the *μνος* of the Greeks), as well as in the world of man, who in various ways afflict and harass humanity, and whose malignant influence is averted by invoking the aid of Budha, and by the offering of human and other sacrifices to themselves.

* At the present time a discussion is being carried on in the colonial newspapers on *Nirwana*, by the learned in Buddhism, wherein some invest Nirwana with material properties.

Having noticed, in a preliminary way, the several supernatural agencies, we shall be better prepared to follow our subject. No undertaking of any kind is attempted by the Singalese without invoking the aid of some supernatural power ; so little accustomed are they to adapt means to ends, and so little confidence have they in their own unaided efforts. This, no doubt, is the result of the teaching of a religion in itself inert and lifeless. Accordingly, when assailed by disease, the Singalese resort to supernatural aid, and hence *the treatment of diseases by charms.*

A charm, among the Singalese, is the pronouncing of a set form of words, either in Sanskrit or any other learned language, unintelligible to the masses, in which the *God* or *Yakko*, who presides over the particular malady, is evoked. Persons suffering from colic, toothache, fever, snake-bites, etc., among the lower classes, frequently resort to have a charm pronounced over them, or to have a charmed thread tied either round their neck or arm, in which, when done, they implicitly believe they find relief. In the preparation of expensive medicines and medicinal oils for the cure of severe maladies, various charms are recommended in medical works, to be rehearsed during the process of preparation, not only to ensure their efficacy, but to avert the influence of certain devils, who often take a fiendish delight in overthrowing the designs of man and creating disappointments.

Charming. Each class of diseases has a particular God presiding over it ; and the charmer, in order to cure, resorts to its particular deity. He accordingly addresses himself to the particular God in an unintelligible language, and pronounces the invocation over a thread or olah (palm-leaf) dipped in an infusion of turmeric, which is afterwards fastened to the arm or tied round the neck of the patient. When an olah is employed, a diagram, significative of some emblem of the deity invoked, or under whose influence the patient is suffering, is drawn on it with a style.

In a medical work of some celebrity, *Chinta Mane. Saweya*, the following charm is given as a cure for diarrhoea. The charm *One Namō Sarya, Grahaneya, sree narayane hi yeswaha* (Adoration to the God, Eclipse of the Sun, Vishnu, Alone !) is recommended to be repeated *seven* times. The same inscribed on a palmyra leaf, which had been eaten by a beetle, is then tied round the arm of the patient. A "*balī*" offering is also to be made, which is done in this wise. Prepare an image of the planetary system, and decorate it with flowers ; inscribe upon it the following charm (which is omitted for the sake of brevity. It gives only the names of the different kinds of diarrhoea, and asks the gods to "break them in pieces, and send them out of the patient.") Prepare some boiled rice, with *seven* vegetable curries. The person officiating, having washed himself and put on clean

clothes just come from the washerman, takes the image and waves it round the head and person of the patient, and places it, with the fruit of a milky tree, on the "eastern side" of the patient; then placing the offering of rice and curries on the image, repeats the charm *three* times. He then washes himself again, and offers a piece of silk, flowers, and incense; having done this, he concludes by saying: "May the diarrhœa of this patient be cured."

The whole ceremony is better known as the "*Buli Arrinnawa*," which is different from another ceremony called *Devil Worship*. Necromancy is professed by persons known as *Yakko Dun*; and the *Capuas*, or Devil Priests, arrogate to themselves the power of removing, as well of inflicting, bodily pain and torments; and during the prevalence of unusual sickness, or on the outbreak of an epidemic, the services of *Capuas* are in constant demand.

Devil Dancing, or *Lime Cutting*, by which the malignity of the Evil Spirit is removed, is performed on a large, grand, and imposing scale. A monster effigy of a planet, or a god, or devil, is made with clay, daubed with all sorts of colours. The patient is placed before it, the dancer repeats, to the beat of a drum, verses in Singalese. At the end of each four verses, he touches the person with a leafy branch, saying: "May such a disease leave the head"; he goes round again, and touches the neck in this way, until, by a succession of rounds, the feet are reached. This carousal is continued from night until morning, the bystanders crying out in chorus at every prayer, *Aye bo wewa* (May he have long life.)

The following account of a devil dance is extracted from a local missionary periodical, *The Friend*:—

"I went (says the Rev. J. Selkirk) with the interpreter, about nine o'clock this evening, to a house in the village (Buddigamme) where the planetary performers, or astrologers, were performing a ceremony over a sick woman. There were large images of the nine planets, fantastically painted, on a large hurdle made of bamboo and covered with clay, made very smooth. The nine planets are: the Sun, the Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus, Saturn, the Earth, and *Rahu*, a kind of being that is said to take the Sun or Moon in its mouth when there is an eclipse. The images of the planets were merely painted round the sides; those of several gods and goddesses were made very prominent, particularly one of a female, who occupied the chief place, in the middle. On the right and left of her were two horrible looking beings, with immense eyes and noses, and large tusks, like those of a boar, bending towards the ear in a semicircular shape. Above her head were two other images, frightful in the extreme; and

under her feet was a small figure of a female. The woman, for whose benefit this ceremony was performed, has been afflicted with dropsy for more than a year; and has in that time taken various medicines, but without apparent effect; and this ceremony appears to be the last resort. She was placed on a mat on the floor, opposite the images, in a small madua (shed); and all the time the astrologer was reciting his incantation, she was commanded to look straight at the images, which were raised, and placed in a reclining position directly in front of her. A man stood behind the images, beating the tom-tom; while the astrologer and his assistant recited and danced, brandishing their lighted torches in front of the images, near the woman. During the repetition, dancing, etc., the woman held in her hand a lime fruit attached to a thread, which was fastened to the crown on the head of the uppermost image; and a near relation stood beside her with the flower of the areca nut tree (a species of palm) in his hand, and at the end of each verse broke off small bits of the flower, and threw them into a brazen vessel filled with water, placed near the woman's feet. There were also limes, a cocoanut, betel leaves, etc., near her feet. Each of the planets was invoked in its turn, to avert any evil influence from the woman, and many verses, of different kinds, and in different languages, Pali, Tamul, and Sanskrit, were repeated, which neither the astrologer himself—for he confessed it—nor any one there, could understand or interpret. In some verses, indeed, Pali, Tamul, Singalese, and Sanskrit words seemed all to be jumbled together."

More detailed accounts of this ceremony will be found in Caloway's "*Takheennatenawa*" (Devil Dancing). In Upham's valuable work, demon worship is also noticed; the materials having been furnished by Sir Alexander Johnston, late Chief Justice of Ceylon.

When the pronouncing of charms, and the invocation of all supernatural aid, fail in obtaining the aid solicited, the Singalese resort, as an ulterior measure, to a ceremony called the reading of "*Perit*," by which they invoke the power of Budha himself. This ceremony is nothing more than a public rehearsal, by Buddhist priests, of some passages in the life of their great philosopher, which recount the assistance he afforded to different individuals, in different countries, during his mission upon earth. The ceremony is thus performed:—

A room or a hall is tastefully decorated with leaves, fruits, and flowers, in the usual oriental style, and covered with white cloth inside, to which a number of Buddhist priests are invited. Some six or seven priests, headed by their senior, enter the place thus prepared, and take their seats on carpets spread on the floor, and

placing a relic of *Budha* in an elevated place in the middle of the room, read by turns some miracles performed by *Budha*, in alleviating suffering humanity during his sojourn on earth.

The following is a translation of one of those celebrated *Perits*, made by the Rev. Mr. Gogerly of the Wesleyan Mission, than whom a more profound Pali scholar is not in the island:—

PERIT—KASSAPA BOJJHANGAN.

Thus I heard. *Budha* resided at Kalandaniwassy, in the forest Welu, near Rajagaha. The venerable Kassapa lived in a cave called Pipp'hali, and was ill with a painful and grievous sickness. Then *Budha*, arising from his retirement, went to him, and being seated, said: "Kassapa, how are you? how do you feel? do your pains decrease and not increase? is this disease passing away?" Kassapa replied: "My lord, I have no ease, no repose, but suffer severe pain; my pains increase and do not decrease, and the disease does not appear to abate." *Budha* then said: "There are seven sections of moral science, which have been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me; and which are necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration. What are these seven?"

1. *Contemplation*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

2. *The ascertainment of truth*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

3. *Persevering exertion*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

4. *Contentment*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

5. *Placidity*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught by me, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

6. *Tranquillity*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

7. *Equanimity*. This section of moral science, Kassapa, has

been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and is necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from transmigration.

These, Kassapa, are the seven sections of moral science, which have been fully taught, meditated on, and practised by me, and are necessary for the attainment of knowledge, wisdom, and deliverance from Nirwana. Kassapa replied, "Most assuredly blessed one! most assuredly, excellent one!" When Budha had thus spoken, the venerable Kassapa was much edified, and recovered from his sickness.

Among the superstitious and credulous, these stupid ceremonies have their effect. Impressions are made upon the mind, and the body becomes influenced thereby. It is impossible to deny that recoveries sometimes take place, in certain affections, particularly from diseases where the functions of the nervous system have been deranged. It is a very common circumstance to hear that women with *hysteria* are thus effectually relieved. The natives not being able to distinguish one nervous affection from another, all are known as *sanees* among them.

MARCH 18TH, 1862.

JOHN CRAWFURD, Esq., President, in the Chair.

The following presents were announced, and the thanks of the Society ordered to be returned to their respective donors:—

China, by G. W. Cooke, Esq. (presented by J. Crawford, Esq.)—Thoughts on the Policy of the Crown in India, by J. M. Ludlow, Barrister-at-Law (ditto).—The Origin of Species, by C. Darwin, M.A. (ditto)—Memorials of the Empire of Japan, by Thomas Rundal (ditto).—The Sepoy Revolt, its Causes and Consequences, by Henry Mead (ditto).—A Visit to the Philippine Islands, by Sir J. Bowring (ditto).—Metallurgy, by Dr. John Percy (ditto).—Journal of the Statistical Society.—The Photographic Journal.

The following new Fellows were announced:—Charles Harcourt Chambers, Esq.; E. Darwin, Esq.; the Rev. Professor Kingsley; Harry Parkes, Esq.; Gerald Perry, Esq.; Lieutenant-Colonel Phayre; Alfred W. Sanderson, Esq.; James White, Esq.